

The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research

# Understanding ethnic differences in migration of young adults within Britain from a lifecourse perspective

CCSR Working Paper 2010-04

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# **Understanding ethnic differences in migration of young adults within Britain from a lifecourse perspective**

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## **Abstract**

This paper is situated at the confluence of two emerging areas of research: a lifecourse approach in internal migration studies and in geography more broadly; and studies of sub-populations within lifecourse research. The paper aims to better understand the complexities of ethnic group migration in Britain, in particular why young adults of some ethnic groups are more mobile than others. The paper draws on theories of norms of transition to adulthood. UK Census microdata of migration within Britain by age and ethnic group are used. The paper shows ethnic similarities: migration patterns that are distinct in young adulthood compared with other ages and many common characteristics of mobility. However, there are also differences between ethnic groups in levels of migration and in how young adult life events are associated with migration. In particular, partnership brings increased residential mobility for White British young adults but reduced mobility for South Asian young adults with females in both cases being the ‘partnership movers’. Being a student increases mobility for White British and Chinese young adults but reduces mobility for Blacks and South Asians (especially females) raising issues of access to higher education. The paper concludes that a lifecourse perspective provides an understanding of ethnic differences in migration previously lacking from ‘segregation’ perspectives.

**Keywords:** Internal migration, ethnic groups, lifecourse, young adults, Britain, Census

## Introduction

Migration has long been recognised as an experience associated strongly with life stage and migration studies have been present in the development of lifecourse research over the past two decades (Mortimer and Shanahan 2004, Mulder 1993). However, it is only relatively recently that substantial attention has been paid to the interaction between migration and life course, as demonstrated by the publication of special issues on this topic in *Population, Space and Place* (2008) and *Demographic Research* (2007). The confluence of these issues comes partly from the rise of family migration research and, within Geography, from a recognition of the need to think beyond age as something fixed, an idea which “belies the suggestion of cultural variance and fluidity” (Hopkins and Pain 2007, 288).

This emerging arena of research has been propelled by findings that transitions to adulthood and migration’s relation to family change are more complex than previous understandings recognised (Bailey and Boyle 2004, Kulu and Milewski 2007, Geist and McManus 2008). So too, the geographies of migration across the lifecourse have increased in their complexity (Clark and Withers 2007, Plane and Jurjevich 2009). Thus Geist and McManus (2008, 283) assert that “the increasing complexity of career and family trajectories throughout adulthood call for a re-examination of geographical mobility across all age groups”.

In lifecourse research, there has been recent theorisation about destandardisation and increased complexity of transitions to adulthood in parallel with more general concerns in the social sciences with individualisation of experiences (Elzinger and Liefbroer 2007, Arnett 2004). This has led to calls for the study of the experiences of subcultures and subgroups and the comment that “the life course literature has largely ignored these alternative life course patterns” (Dannefer 2003, 651).

This paper engages with these debates by focusing on the intersection of migration, life stage and ethnicity. It attempts to bring together theories of life course, post-immigration integration and internal migration to better understand the complexities of ethnic group migration in Britain. In particular, the paper draws on theories of norms of transition to adulthood to interpret ethnic differences in levels of young adult migration.

To date, studies of ethnic differences in migration within Britain have been situated in debates on segregation, and interpretations have focused on commonalities in migration experiences being a challenge to assertions of ‘minority self-segregation’ (Simpson and Finney 2009, Phillips 2006). The question remains, however, of whether there are ethnic differences in barriers, constraints, norms and expectations that may shape migration patterns differently for young adults. Certainly, ethnic differences in employment, study, health, wealth, housing, partnership and family formation are well documented, illustrating the diversity of experiences of ethnic groups in Britain (e.g. Karn 1997, Modood 1998, Mason 2000, Platt 2005). This paper examines three questions as a means of improving our understanding of diversity of experiences across the lifecourse with respect to migration:

1. Do the most mobile young adults in each ethnic group have the same characteristics?
2. Are young adult life events (study, partnership, marriage, children) associated differently with migration across ethnic groups?
3. Is there a gender difference in the association between migration and young adult life events for ethnic groups?

### **Migration and norms of transitions to adulthood**

Studies of internal migration in population geography and demography have in recent years been influenced by lifecourse theories (usefully reviewed by Bailey 2009) and re-theorisation of family. The aim has been to move beyond economic rationality explanations of

migration and understand diversity of experiences. Despite recognition (Bailey and Boyle 2004) of the need to understand ethnic differences in migration experience, little work has to date engaged with this issue.

A lifecourse approach to internal migration is concerned with how life events (or transitions) such as beginning or ending study or work, having a child, forming or dissolving a partnership, are associated with moving house (Rabe and Taylor 2009). This paper is interested in how this association differs between ethnic groups for life events in young adulthood.

Studies of cross-national heterogeneity in transitions to adulthood can provide theoretical direction for the study of sub-populations. For example, Fussell *et al* (2007, 411) investigated inter-national heterogeneity in transition to adulthood by comparing experiences in the USA, Canada and Australia. They found country differences in the transition to social adulthood which they attributed to “a function of difference in values and marriage markets”. In particular, they found earlier transition to adulthood in the USA to be the result of more traditional values but recognised that their explanations would benefit from “analysis of sub-population within the United States since distinct ethnic groups exhibit very different family formation patterns” (Fussell *et al* 2007, 411, Gauthier 2007).

Of more direct relevance are studies of ethnic differences in migration in young adulthood which focus on family influence and cultures of home leaving. These studies are situated in family migration literatures which are concerned with the implications of changing family arrangements for residential mobility (Bailey and Boyle 2004). Mulder (1997) sets an agenda for this research, arguing that the family context and inter-generational transfers for migration decisions may be particularly important for non-western migrants who tend to be both more mobile and place greater importance on family than their western counterparts. Intergenerational transfer can have an effect on migration in terms of ethnic-specific

preferences and behaviours (e.g. strength of family ties, traditions of home leaving) and in terms of status inheritance (socio-economic resources).

de Valk and Billari (2007) examine the effect of intergenerational transfer on homeleaving for young adults of different ethnic groups in the Netherlands. They find few ethnic differences in factors associated with staying in the family home: generally, family ties and socio-economics affect whether young adults remain in the parental home in the same way for all ethnic groups. However, in considering pathways out of the parental home de Valk and Billari (2007) find ethnic differences. For example, “being in a union was much less associated with leaving home for Moroccan, Antillean and especially Turkish young adults than was the case for the Surinamese and the Dutch” (de Valk and Billari 2007: 213).

European studies also point to the importance of examining gender: women can be expected to show greater family solidarity than men and are more likely to move long distances for reasons of marriage (Mulder 2007). In the Netherlands, girls of Turkish and Moroccan origin are likely to leave home at the point of marriage whereas Dutch girls tend to leave home before marriage to live independently (de Valk and Billari 2007).

North American studies of timings and pathways of homeleaving have also found notable ethnic differences. Mitchell *et al* (2004) find ethnocultural factors to be important in the migration of young adults in Greater Vancouver, Canada. Particularly, young adults of Indo, Chinese and Southern European origin stay longer in the parental home than those of British origin.

Goldschneider and Goldschneider (1988, 1997) have examined these questions in a US context and find differences in homeleaving between White, Black and Hispanic young adults. In particular, Blacks and Hispanics leave home more slowly than Whites and the pathways for homeleaving also differ. Hispanics have the highest rates of leaving home for marriage followed by Whites with Blacks having considerably lower rates. Whites have

higher rates of leaving home for job-related reasons than Blacks or Hispanics. The probability of leaving home to attend school (university) is consistently lower for Blacks than Whites over time: “Leaving home for higher education is the family process most closely linked with the reproduction of socioeconomic differences...going away to school...remains difficult [for Blacks] in a deeply segregated society” (Goldschneider and Goldschneider 1997: 305).

The British context is undoubtedly specific but these North American and European studies nevertheless demonstrate ethnic differences in how migration is associated with life events in young adulthood and provide clues as to important factors that may influence these differences. The following sections discuss how ethnic differences in three key life events - higher education, partnership formation (including marriage) and having children - may be expected to lead to ethnic differences in levels of migration of young adults in the British context.

### ***Higher Education and migration***

The transitions to higher education and from here to graduate employment are commonly associated with residential migration in Britain (Faggian et al 2006). It is common in Britain to live independently whilst studying and to study away from the home town or city. There are ethnic differences in higher education participation and graduate employment that have implications for migration. Particularly, minority ethnic students are more likely than Whites to study in London and to live at home whilst studying. Family influence on higher education decisions is greater for minorities than for Whites, particularly for Asians and particularly for females (Connor et al 2004). Ethnic minority students, particularly females, can therefore be expected to be less mobile than their White counterparts.

### ***Partnership, children and migration***

The associations between changes in family composition and residential mobility have been studied for many decades but have regained interest recently in Britain because of transformations in the nature of the family and increases in migration of young adults for study. Partnership formation (and dissolution) are family events associated with high mobility: “The formation of a new relationship inevitably involves one partner moving and may often involve both” (Flowerdew and Al-Hamad 2004: 343).

Being married is associated with residential stability compared with other marital statuses, but the points of marriage and marriage dissolution, and periods either side of these events, are associated with high levels of mobility (Halfacree *et al* 1992, Bonney *et al* 1999). Early marriage and the addition of a first child to a household can increase mobility as families adjust to housing needs, lifestyle choices and financial circumstances. New family forms such as single parenthood, unmarried parenthood and cohabitation account for a disproportionate share of residential mobility (Kulu and Milewski 2007, Geist and McManus 2008).

There are considerable ethnic differences in family arrangements (Lindley *et al* 2004). Levels of cohabitation for South Asian young adults are a fifth of those for White British young adults. For South Asian ethnic groups family influence and honour (izzat) have greater impact on individual’s life courses than other ethnic groups (Dale *et al* 2002). The greater attachment to the family home for South Asian groups may be associated with reduced mobility compared with the rest of the population. The point of marriage, rather than pre-marital cohabitation, is associated with the establishment of an independent home or the migration of a female partner to her spouse’s (family) home (Dyson and Visaria 2004).

Marriage is much less a distinguishing feature of partnership for Caribbeans. In fact, people of Black ethnic groups are least likely to be married (Lindley *et al* 2004). For Caribbean women, lone motherhood is more frequent than partnered motherhood showing



very different family norms from the South Asian and White populations (Dale *et al* 2006). However, there is little reason to assume that cohabitation or lone parenthood act in a different way for Caribbeans than for other ethnic groups with respect to migration.

## **Data**

Description and explanation of patterns of migration in Britain for young adults of different ethnic groups demands data that are not abundantly available. A lifecourse approach will ideally examine the synchronicity of young adult life events (beginning study, forming a partnership, getting married, having children) with residential migration (Mulder and Wagner 1993). This demands longitudinal data. However, British longitudinal datasets lack the required combination of variables (migration, ethnicity, life events) and sufficient sample size for young adult ethnic group populations.

The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) is an extensive national annual survey of around 10,000 individuals. The BHPS has been used for analysis of residential mobility (e.g. Rabe and Taylor 2009) but not where the focus is on minority ethnic groups which constitute less than 10 percent of the population, or young adults by ethnic group. The Labour Force Survey includes only limited migration information and the data are only longitudinal over 5 quarters which is insufficient to capture the relation between migration and young adult life events. The Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LSYPE) has adequate variables for the questions posed here and a sample size of around 15,000 households. However, the sample is too young for this study, being those born in 1989/1990 (age 20 in 2010). In sum, existing longitudinal surveys have sample sizes which are too small to allow analysis broken down by ethnic group and age and in some cases the populations sampled are inappropriate and migration and life events are not sufficiently captured.

Thus, census data provides the source for this paper. The 2001 Census is nine years old and cross-sectional but has the required variables (and geographical details) and, crucially, large samples in the microdata. This paper uses the UK 2001 Census Individual Sample of Anonymised Records (SAR). This is a 3% sample of the population with approximately 1.84 million records.

### **Modelling migration**

The analyses that follow model whether an individual (in this case a young adult) has migrated or not. As the outcome variable is dichotomous (migrant/non-migrant) multiple logistic regression modelling is used (Hosmer and Lemeshow 2000). This allows examination of the associations of certain social or demographic positions – such as being a student or being married – with migration, whilst controlling for other characteristics of an individual.

The selection of variables in the models was guided initially by the literature on characteristics of migrants and has been developed through examination of the relationship between migration and the explanatory variables to ensure that the results in the models presented are robust. The models were refined such that only significant variables were included and the addition of variables improved the fit of the model (as indicated by decreases in the -2 Log Likelihood value and increases in Pseudo R squared values). In the final models, the variables used to predict migration of young adults are ethnic group, sex, tenure, qualifications, socio-economic classification, partnership status, whether the individual is a student, whether the individual is an immigrant (born outside the UK) and whether the individual has dependent children.

## **Definitions of ethnic group, migration and young adults**

### *Ethnic Group*

‘Ethnic group’ is used in this paper to identify groups who differ in terms of their ancestral (im)migration history, their colour, their religion, and their customs and traditions. Particular age structures and levels of education and wealth are associated with different ethnic groups. The 2001 Census SAR gives 13 ethnic groups. There is much debate about the meaning of the census ethnic group categories, and the extent to which they successfully capture the ethnic diversity of Britain (for example see Aspinall 2000). There is considerable heterogeneity within the ethnic groups captured by the census. Ethnic group information can be viewed as a useful indicator of certain individual and group characteristics, but in no way can it provide an essential character for a set of people nor full explanations for differing experiences.

### *Migration*

UK census data on migration are based on a question about place of residence one year prior to census day. If this is different from the address on census day, the individual is considered to have migrated in the year prior to the census. This is transition migration data rather than event data; it captures moves within a given time period (in this case 2000-2001) rather than every migration event. The main limitation of this measure of migration for this study is, as discussed above, there is no information about the relative timings of migration and changes in individual circumstances such as getting married.

### *Young adults*

Young adulthood is the period in life following adolescence in which an individual moves on from dependence on parents or guardians to lead an independent life. It is well established

that mobility is high in young adulthood and events associated with migration occur disproportionately in this period of life (Halfacree *et al* 1992, Bonney *et al* 1999). In the transition to adulthood, or “years in between”, most young adults “move from the security/insecurity of their families through a series of usually more insecure tenures, relationships and occupations” (Thomas and Dorling 2007, 88).

Lifecourse research places focus on life events rather than age groups or life stages, and relates these life events to life outcomes, experiences and attitudes, taking into account the complexities of individual pathways through periods of the lifecourse such as young adulthood (Bailey 2009). Thus, the boundaries of ‘young adulthood’ are fuzzy. In the analyses presented here, in the absence of synchronous event data, the population of interest is selected on the basis of age. The age band has been defined to capture the section of the population which is most mobile; and the section of the population for which ethnic differences in levels of migration are greatest.

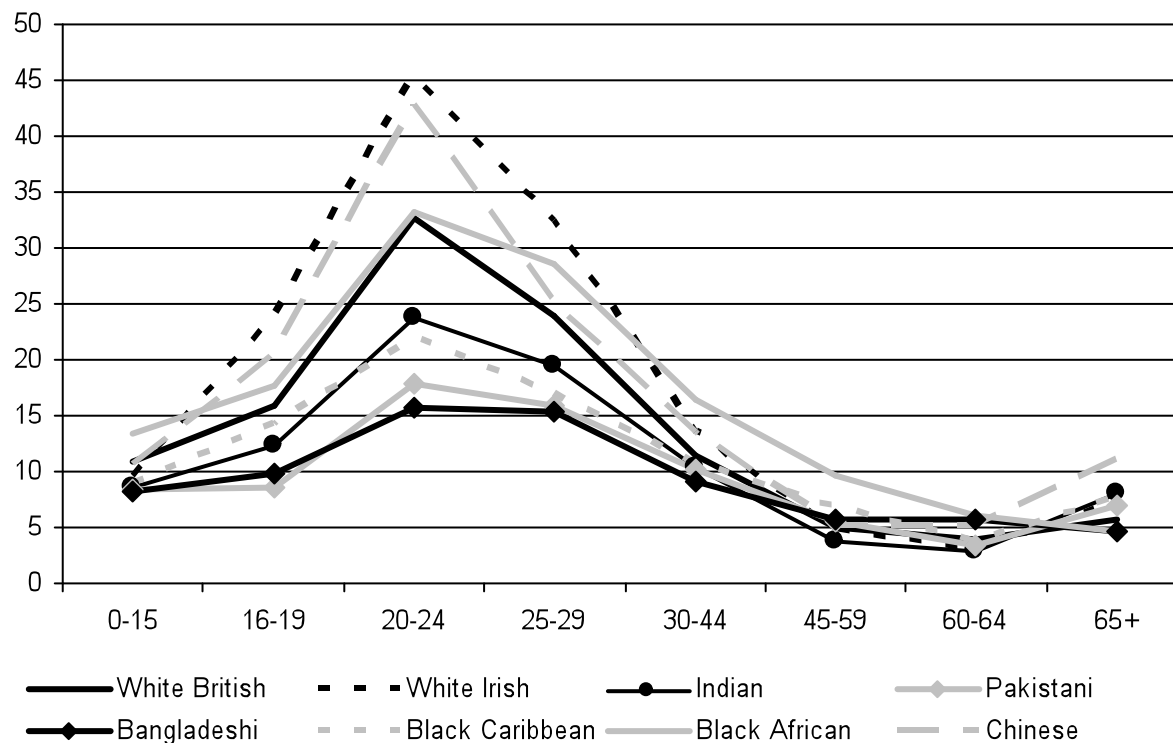
The limited body of work on ethnic differences in levels and geographies of internal migration in Britain has identified age as an important factor in understanding ethnic differences (Stillwell and Hussain 2008, Simpson and Finney 2009). Most generally, the young age structure of minority groups is a primary reason for their overall internal migration rates being higher than those of White Britons. Furthermore, each ethnic group demonstrates an age-migration profile in which people aged between 20 and 29 are the most mobile internal migrants (Table I, Figure 1). In the year prior to the last census, Pakistani and Bangladeshi young adults migrated least within Britain with migration rates around 15 percent. The highest rates are for the White Irish, White Other and Chinese groups of which at least four in ten people aged 20-24 migrated within Britain between 2000 and 2001.

Table I: Within Britain migration rates (%) 2000-2001, by ethnic group and age

	<b>White British</b>	<b>White Irish</b>	<b>White Other</b>	<b>Mixed</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>Pakistani</b>	<b>Bangladeshi</b>	<b>Other Asian</b>	<b>Black Caribbean</b>	<b>Black African</b>	<b>Black Other</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
0-15	10.9	9.6	15.0	11.9	8.6	8.5	8.2	11.4	8.9	13.5	9.4	10.7	15.0	10.9
16-19	15.8	24.0	24.4	15.9	12.3	8.6	9.8	15.2	14.3	17.7	12.7	20.5	24.0	15.8
20-24	32.6	45.4	48.1	33.7	23.7	17.9	15.6	29.4	22.0	33.2	19.6	42.8	37.0	32.4
25-29	24.0	32.6	36.2	28.1	19.5	15.9	15.4	23.7	17.0	28.6	16.2	25.2	32.3	24.3
30-44	11.4	13.5	17.7	14.8	10.3	10.2	9.2	16.7	10.7	16.4	11.4	13.5	18.9	11.7
45-59	5.0	4.7	6.4	7.9	3.7	5.6	5.6	6.4	6.7	9.6	9.2	5.1	7.8	5.0
60-64	3.8	3.1	4.4	4.1	2.9	3.5	5.8	5.0	3.7	6.0	2.0	5.3	6.6	3.8
65+	5.7	7.2	5.1	3.8	8.0	7.0	4.6	8.3	7.7	4.7	9.7	11.1	16.4	5.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>10.5</i>	<i>10.2</i>	<i>18.0</i>	<i>15.0</i>	<i>10.1</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>9.7</i>	<i>14.3</i>	<i>9.9</i>	<i>17.0</i>	<i>11.3</i>	<i>16.1</i>	<i>18.7</i>	<i>10.8</i>

Source: 2001 Census SAR, GB. Numerator is population who changed address in the year prior to the census; Denominator is 2001 population in each age/ethnic group.

Figure 1: Within Britain migration rates (%) 2000-2001 by age for selected ethnic groups



Source: 2001 Census SAR, GB. Numerator is population who changed address in the year prior to the census; Denominator is 2001 population in each age/ethnic group.

Notwithstanding the common pattern of young adults being most mobile in each ethnic group, and the younger age structure of non-White groups leading to their overall higher migration rates, ethnic differences in levels of migration are greatest for young adult ages (Figure 1). It is fruitful, therefore, for a study of ethnic differences in migration to focus on the ages of greatest difference, in this case between 16 and 29. The analyses takes this age group as a whole and in 3 groups, 16 to 19, 20 to 24 and 25 to 29, which are taken to reflect different stages in transition to adulthood.

### **Do the most mobile young adults in each ethnic group have the same characteristics?**

Table II presents results of a logistic regression model in which within-Britain migration of young adults is predicted using socio-economic and demographic variables. The table presents odds ratios of migrating given a set of characteristics. The constant value is the odds of migrating for a person with the reference (or control) characteristics (first in the list for each variable and indicated at the bottom of the table). The value for each variable is the change in odds of migrating for the reference person when the characteristic of that variable is substituted for the relevant reference characteristic. So, for example, the odds of migrating within Britain for a White British, manager/professional, single, male, home owner with up to GCSE qualifications<sup>1</sup>, not a student, born in the UK, without children are 0.23 (the constant). However, if this person were living in private rented accommodation but retained the other characteristics, their odds of migrating would increase four fold (odds ratio of 4.17). Thus we can see that being a private renter is associated with higher levels of mobility than being a home owner when other characteristics are held constant. The pseudo R squared value for the model is 0.25 which, although not strictly a measure of goodness of fit (Hosmer and Lemeshow 2000), indicates that the substantive significance of the model is highly

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<sup>1</sup> General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications are gained at the end of compulsory education in the UK, usually age 16.

satisfactory (Field 2005). The figures that are emboldened in Table II are statistically significant. In other words, the effect of the variable can be considered not to have happened by chance; we can say that the effect is different from zero with 95 percent confidence.

The results show that the most mobile young adults are managers and professionals, female, private renters, with qualifications to A level or degree level, immigrants, students, with children, single or cohabiting. These results are in line with findings for the population as a whole (see Finney and Simpson 2008) with the exception of the effect of having children. When all ages are considered, having dependent children tends to reduce mobility, other factors held constant.

Models for ethnic groups separately (not shown here) demonstrate that there are similarities in the way that individual characteristics affect the probability of migrating. For young adults of all ethnic groups, having A level or degree level (post-school) qualifications, being a student, living in rented accommodation and being an immigrant have particularly large effects on increasing propensity to migrate.

The effect of tenure should be noted as of particular importance in understanding mobility of young adults in Britain. Tenure has a mediating effect particularly on being a student because of the tendency for students in Britain to live in private rented accommodation. Living in rented accommodation, and particularly in private rented accommodation, is associated with markedly higher odds of migrating than other tenures. Indeed, the highest probabilities of migrating are for young adults in private rented accommodation for each ethnic group. The relationship between renting and migrating is dynamic without clear causal direction: renting facilitates migration by reducing practical and financial barriers whilst migrants commonly look to rented accommodation in the first instance for similar practical reasons.



Table II: Odds of migrating within Britain for young adults (aged 16-29) predicted with ethnicity, socioeconomic and demographic characteristics

		Odds Ratio	p	95% CI	
				Lower	Upper
Constant		<b>0.23</b>			
Ethnic Group	White British	<b>1.00</b>			
	White Irish	1.00	0.94	0.91	1.11
	White Other	<b>0.86</b>	0.00	0.81	0.92
	Mixed	<b>0.82</b>	0.00	0.76	0.89
	Indian	<b>0.74</b>	0.00	0.69	0.80
	Pakistani	<b>0.73</b>	0.00	0.67	0.79
	Bangladeshi	<b>0.65</b>	0.00	0.57	0.73
	Other Asian	<b>0.71</b>	0.00	0.62	0.81
	Black Caribbean	<b>0.58</b>	0.00	0.52	0.64
	Black African	<b>0.68</b>	0.00	0.62	0.75
	Black Other	<b>0.54</b>	0.00	0.43	0.67
	Chinese	<b>0.75</b>	0.00	0.67	0.85
	Other	<b>0.85</b>	0.02	0.74	0.97
Socio-economic Classification	Managers and Professionals	<b>1.00</b>			
	Intermediate Occupations	<b>0.93</b>	0.00	0.90	0.96
	Semi-routine and Routine	<b>0.91</b>	0.00	0.88	0.94
	Never Worked/Unknown	<b>0.73</b>	0.00	0.70	0.75
Sex	Male	<b>1.00</b>			
	Female	<b>1.09</b>	0.00	1.07	1.12
Tenure	Home Owner	<b>1.00</b>			
	Part rent, Part mortgage	<b>1.33</b>	0.00	1.20	1.47
	Social Renter	<b>1.09</b>	0.00	1.06	1.13
	Private Renter	<b>4.17</b>	0.00	4.08	4.27
Qualifications	None up to GCSE	<b>1.00</b>			
	A Level to Degree Level	<b>1.86</b>	.000	1.82	1.90
	Other or Unknown	<b>1.09</b>	.012	1.02	1.17
Immigrant Status	Non immigrant	<b>1.00</b>			
	Immigrant	<b>1.28</b>	0.00	1.22	1.34
Children	No Children	<b>1.00</b>			
	Has Children	<b>1.13</b>	0.00	1.10	1.16
Student Status	Non Student	<b>1.00</b>			
	Student	<b>1.12</b>	0.00	1.08	1.16
Partnership Status	Single	<b>1.00</b>			
	Married	<b>0.34</b>	0.00	0.33	0.35
	Cohabiting	<b>1.30</b>	0.00	1.27	1.34

Notes: Reference category is White British, Manager/Professional, single, male, home owner, with qualifications up to GCSE level, not a student, born in UK, without children. Population: GB age 16-29 (excluding stulawy=1). Source: 2001 UK Census Individual Sample of Anonymised Records. Migration is in period 2000-2001. Emboldened coefficients are significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . The pseudo R squared value (Nagelkerke) is 0.25 and the -2 Log Likelihood value is 60,287.0.

Table II shows the effect of ethnic group on mobility. Ethnic group is a significant predictor of migration and when socio-economic and demographic characteristics are taken into account, ethnic differences in young adults' propensity to migrate remain. White British young adults are the most mobile, other characteristics being equal. The Black groups and Bangladeshis have the lowest odds of migrating at around two thirds the odds of their White British counterparts. Indian, Pakistani and Chinese young adults are three quarters as likely to migrate as Whites.

The model in Table II was run for the ages 16-19, 20-24 and 25-29 separately (results not shown). The effects on migration of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics do not differ from taking the age group 16-29 as a whole with a three notable exceptions. First, having children acts differently across ages: for the youngest group (16-19), having children more than doubles the odds of migrating (odds ratio of 2.6) whereas for the oldest group (25-29) having children reduces mobility (odds ratio of 0.91) and having children has no significant effect on propensity to migrate for those aged 20-24.

Second, although private renting increases mobility for each age group in relation to owner-occupation, this is greatest for the youngest (16-19; odds ratio 8.1) and lowest for the oldest young adults (25-29; odds ratio 2.5). This can be interpreted as the private rented sector supporting greater transience in the younger, less settled life stage (including for students). However, as the results come from different models comparisons of coefficients should be taken with caution. Third, being a student does not have a significant effect on mobility for the age group 16-19. This may be because the majority of students in this age group will be in Further (school or college) rather than Higher (university) education and very likely, therefore, to be living in the parental home, thus reducing the mobility differential between students and non-students.

In sum, propensity to migrate for young adults in Britain is associated with socio-economic and demographic characteristics in ways that are well documented for the population as a whole, and this is the case for each ethnic group. The notable exception is that having children increases mobility for the youngest young adults (aged 16-19). Ethnic group predicts migration propensity and ethnic differences in mobility remain when other characteristics are taken into account. Of particular note are the low migration rates of Bangladeshi and Black young adults. This leads to the question of what it is about ethnic group that affects migration.

**Are young adult life events (study, partnership, marriage and children) associated differently with migration across ethnic groups?**

To explore this question three variables are used which represent young adult life events: whether an individual has children, whether an individual is a student and partnership status. These young adult life event variables are interacted with ethnic group in an extension of the model presented in Table II. The results of the interactions are displayed as probabilities of migrating in Table III<sup>2</sup>. There are additional effects of being in particular ethnic groups combined with being a student, having children, being married and cohabiting. Including these interactions in the model improves its ability to predict migration outcomes which match the observed outcomes.

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<sup>2</sup> Including the interaction terms in the model displayed in Table III has virtually no effect on the main effects coefficients shown in Table II.

Table III: Effect of young adult life events and ethnic group on propensity to migrate within Britain, ages 16-29

	Ethnic Group			Student*Ethnic Group			Children*Ethnic Group			Married*Ethnic Group			Cohabiting*Ethnic Group		
	Probability of Migrating (%)	p	B	Probability of Migrating (%)	p		Probability of Migrating (%)	p	B	Probability of Migrating (%)	p	B	Probability of Migrating (%)	p	B
White British	<b>19.28</b>	0.00	-1.43	<b>21.48</b>	0.00	0.14	<b>20.56</b>	0.00	0.08	<b>7.12</b>	0.00	-1.14	<b>23.99</b>	.000	.279
White Irish	17.94	0.23	-0.09	<b>26.39</b>	0.01	0.36	17.23	0.42	-0.13	7.53	0.28	0.15	23.20	.714	.045
White Other	<b>16.94</b>	0.00	-0.16	19.41	0.64	0.03	17.46	0.60	-0.04	<b>9.03</b>	0.00	0.42	<b>16.34</b>	.000	-.369
Mixed	<b>15.93</b>	0.00	-0.23	16.46	0.31	-0.10	17.65	0.69	0.04	<b>7.87</b>	0.00	0.34	20.29	.531	-.066
Indian	<b>14.31</b>	0.00	-0.36	14.92	0.29	-0.09	<b>19.64</b>	0.00	0.30	<b>6.17</b>	0.01	0.20	<b>10.96</b>	.000	-.617
Pakistani	<b>11.46</b>	0.00	-0.61	<b>9.36</b>	0.00	-0.36	<b>17.38</b>	0.00	0.41	<b>6.73</b>	0.00	0.55	11.91	.177	-.263
Bangladeshi	<b>9.34</b>	0.00	-0.84	8.03	0.07	-0.30	<b>16.07</b>	0.00	0.54	<b>6.14</b>	0.00	0.68	9.45	.393	-.263
Other Asian	<b>14.48</b>	0.00	-0.34	14.79	0.48	-0.11	21.31	0.07	0.39	5.56	0.60	0.08	14.14	.300	-.284
Black Caribbean	<b>11.30</b>	0.00	-0.63	10.12	0.07	-0.26	13.39	0.41	0.11	<b>6.72</b>	0.00	0.57	15.80	.284	.166
Black African	<b>14.29</b>	0.00	-0.36	<b>13.28</b>	0.02	-0.22	15.04	0.88	-0.02	<b>8.56</b>	0.00	0.56	14.80	.145	-.217
Black Other	<b>8.33</b>	0.00	-0.97	9.78	0.88	0.04	<b>19.80</b>	0.00	0.92	4.62	0.10	0.51	12.38	.669	.141
Chinese	<b>13.78</b>	0.00	-0.40	<b>20.68</b>	0.00	0.35	15.43	0.87	0.05	5.05	0.81	0.04	13.23	.086	-.364
Other	<b>16.05</b>	0.04	-0.22	18.85	0.67	0.06	18.50	0.66	0.09	<b>7.95</b>	0.03	0.34	<b>11.74</b>	.023	-.513

Notes: Reference category is White British, Manager/Professional, single, male, home owner, with qualifications up to GCSE level, not a student, born in UK, without children. Population: GB age 16-29 (excluding stulawy=1). Source: 2001 UK Census Individual Sample of Anonymised Records. Migration is in the period 2000-2001. Emboldened probabilities are significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . P is the probability of migrating for the specified characteristics, displayed as a percentage. Addition of the interaction terms has virtually no effect on the coefficients for the other variables in the model. It increases the pseudo R squared value from 0.251 to 0.253 and reduces the -2 Log Likelihood value from 60,287.0 to 59,845.0.

Taking young adults aged 16-29 as a whole the effect of being a student and in particular ethnic groups produces consistent results for the White British and Chinese ethnic groups: being a student has an additional effect of increasing odds of migrating. Being a student increases the probability of migrating from 19 percent to 21 percent for White British young adults and from 14 to 21 percent for Chinese young adults. For Pakistani and Black African young adults, however, being a student has the additional effect of reducing the probability of migrating.

Having children increases probability of migrating for each ethnic group and the interaction of children and ethnicity is statistically significant for White British, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Other young adults. The additional effect of having children is particularly strong for the non-White groups, increasing probability of migrating by up to 11 percent.

Being married reduces mobility for each ethnic group. The effect of being in a particular ethnic group and married additionally reduces mobility with statistical significance for all ethnic groups apart from White Irish, Other Asian, Black Other and Chinese. White British young adults who are single have a 19 percent probability of migrating. This reduces to 7 percent for those who are married, other characteristics held constant. The same pattern is seen for other groups: married Indian young adults, for example, have a 6 percent probability of migrating compared with 14 percent for those who are single.

It is worth noting that if cohabitation is not included in the model as a partnership status (and these individuals thus classified as single) being married reduces mobility compared to being single for White British young adults but increases mobility for the South Asian groups. Specifically, not considering cohabitation, White British young adults who are married have an 11 percent chance of migrating compared to 13 percent for those who are not married; for

South Asian young adults the probability of migrating for non-married young adults is around 6 percent rising to around 12 percent for those who are married.

This suggests a very different role for cohabitation in shaping migration patterns for White British young adults compared with other ethnic groups. Indeed, Table III shows the effect of cohabiting and being in each ethnic group on migration probabilities. For White British, cohabiting increases mobility (from 19 to 24 percent) whereas for Indian young adults cohabiting reduces mobility (from 14 to 11 percent). For Indians, cohabitation is acting in the same way as marriage in bringing residential stability. For White British young adults, however, marriage and cohabitation have different implications for residential mobility.

Young adult life events, namely being a student and cohabiting, are differently associated with migration across ethnic groups. Being a student is associated with increased propensity to migrate for White British and Chinese young adults but decreased propensity to migrate for Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Black Africans. Cohabiting is associated with increased propensity to migrate for White British young adults but reduced propensity to migrate for Indians. Having children acts to increase propensity to migrate for each ethnic group and with statistical significance for the White British, South Asian and Black Other groups. This differs from the finding for the population overall where children have a stabilising effect on residential mobility. Being married consistently reduces propensity to migrate across ethnic groups.

Are these patterns consistent across the 16-29 age range? The probabilities of migrating for each ethnic group and the young adult life events of study, having children, being married and cohabiting are displayed in Table IV for the age groups 16-19, 20-24 and 25-29. In general the patterns for 16-29 year olds taken as a whole are confirmed for separate age groups, though there are some differences between ages in which interactions are statistically significant. The 16-29 patterns are most closely matched with those of the 20-24 year olds.

Indeed, there are some interesting deviations from the all-ages results for the 16-19 and 25-29 year olds. In particular, being a student is not a significant predictor of migration for any ethnic group for 16-19 year olds. For this age group also, cohabitation is associated with reduced mobility for the Pakistani ethnic group. For 25-29 year olds, having children reduces mobility for White Britons, contrary to the all-ages effect of children being associated with increased mobility compared with not having children. Interestingly, the stabilising effect on residential mobility of having children evident for the older White British young adults is not evident for other ethnic groups.

Table IV: Effect of young adult life events and ethnic group on propensity to migrate within Britain by age (16-19, 20-24, 25-29), probabilities of migrating (%)

	16-19				20-24				25-29							
	Student*	Child*	Married*	Cohabiting*	Student*	Child*	Married*	Cohabiting*	Student*	Child*	Married*	Cohabiting*	Student*	Child*	Married*	Cohabiting*
White British	<b>13.6</b>	13.1	<b>29.1</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>18.67</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>31.2</b>	24.3	<b>8.2</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>28.3</b>	
White Irish	17.8	18.2	37.4	2.7	20.2	23.9	28.9	18.0	9.0	24.8	22.1	45.1	19.2	15.2	<b>34.4</b>	
White Other	13.1	9.4	<b>8.0</b>	<b>5.6</b>	16.3	25.5	<b>25.1</b>	24.8	<b>11.8</b>	<b>26.8</b>	21.8	25.7	20.6	<b>15.6</b>	<b>24.0</b>	
Mixed	<b>9.6</b>	9.3	29.5	3.1	10.4	<b>20.2</b>	25.4	17.3	<b>9.6</b>	33.3	21.0	23.8	19.2	<b>18.1</b>	27.1	
Indian	<b>9.7</b>	9.6	5.4	2.9	7.5	<b>18.0</b>	19.7	<b>32.2</b>	5.8	<b>11.7</b>	<b>16.2</b>	18.5	16.3	<b>12.8</b>	17.5	
Pakistani	<b>6.5</b>	4.7	13.5	<b>4.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>7.7</b>	15.3	<b>13.6</b>	15.2	<b>18.3</b>	9.8	21.3	
Bangladeshi	<b>6.2</b>	5.9	14.9	<b>3.5</b>	2.2	<b>9.3</b>	7.7	<b>20.7</b>	<b>6.4</b>	10.8	<b>14.1</b>	12.4	16.5	10.7	15.9	
Other Asian	13.1	8.4	<b>82.3</b>	4.3	0.0	<b>15.1</b>	19.1	21.7	6.7	17.9	20.2	19.2	26.3	8.2	22.0	
Black Caribbean	<b>8.7</b>	7.4	18.8	3.4	12.0	<b>14.4</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>9.4</b>	15.1	<b>13.8</b>	15.1	12.3	9.8	24.8	
Black African	<b>7.0</b>	7.1	18.7	<b>3.9</b>	3.9	<b>19.2</b>	<b>16.4</b>	22.1	7.6	17.2	<b>19.5</b>	21.3	16.1	<b>18.4</b>	24.2	
Black Other	<b>7.0</b>	6.0	38.4	3.5	6.1	<b>12.0</b>	15.0	<b>25.1</b>	5.1	14.5	<b>7.3</b>	10.9	<b>17.4</b>	7.9	19.6	
Chinese	10.9	13.6	0.0	2.2	6.4	<b>18.6</b>	23.6	46.8	6.4	23.1	<b>16.5</b>	25.3	14.2	10.5	12.7	
Other	17.2	16.2	12.9	4.2	8.6	<b>17.6</b>	18.5	13.5	9.0	17.8	22.4	28.7	24.1	15.4	<b>14.1</b>	

Notes: Reference category is White British, Manager/Professional, single, male, home owner, with qualifications up to GCSE level, not a student, born in UK, without children. Population: GB (excluding stulawy=1). Age groups are modelled separately. Source: 2001 UK Census Individual Sample of Anonymised Records. Migration is in the period 2000-2001. Emboldened probabilities are significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . Figures presented are P, the probability of migrating for the specified characteristics, displayed as a percentage, calculated from the B values predicted by the models.



### **Is there a gender difference in the association between migration and young adult life events for ethnic groups?**

We have seen that young adult life events are associated differently with migration for different ethnic groups, particularly for cohabitation and being a student. It can be theorised that these associations will be further modified by sex because of the gendered nature of partnership and parenting. Table V presents models that examine whether being female and a student, having children, being married and cohabiting and in each ethnic group has an additional effect on propensity to migrate. Having already established the importance of ethnic group for mediating the relationship between young adult life events and migration, separate ethnic group models are presented. The results are shown only for those groups for whom at least one of the sex interactions was statistically significant (White British, Indian, Pakistani, Asian Other and Other). The table displays probabilities of migrating.

For most ethnic groups there is no significant additional effect on propensity to migrate of being both female and a student, having children, being married or cohabiting. However, there are some cases where being a female with experience of a young adult life event matters for migration. Young adult White British and Pakistani females who are students are less likely to migrate than their male counterparts. White British, Indian and Pakistani females who are married are less mobile than single females but more mobile than married males of the same ethnic group (other characteristics held constant). White British females who are cohabiting are more mobile than single males, single females, and cohabiting males. It appears that in relationship formation, for White British and South Asian young adults, it is the females who are more involved in residential mobility. Conversely, having children reduces mobility for White British, Pakistani, Other Asian and Other young females compared with not having children and with young males who have children.

Table V: Effect of being female and experiencing young adult life events on propensity to migrate within Britain by ethnic group, probabilities of migrating (%)

	Main Effects					Interactions				Pseudo R squared	
	Female	Student	Having Children	Married	Cohabiting	Female*Student	Female*Having Children	Female*Married	Female*Cohabiting		
Reference											
White British	<b>19.1</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>25.4</b>	25.9
Indian	<b>11.3</b>	12.2	12.7	<b>18.6</b>	<b>4.2</b>	8.0	11.9	14.4	<b>7.3</b>	10.3	26.5
Pakistani	<b>11.2</b>	10.8	13.3	<b>21.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	9.7	<b>8.0</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>9.0</b>	12.2	13.9
Other Asian	<b>17.1</b>	18.5	15.8	<b>49.4</b>	<b>5.2</b>	15.9	14.3	<b>15.7</b>	7.6	18.9	17.7
Other	<b>19.4</b>	26.1	24.4	<b>36.3</b>	<b>6.9</b>	15.4	23.5	<b>22.1</b>	13.8	21.6	18.2

Notes: Reference category is Manager/Professional, single, male, home owner, with qualifications up to GCSE level, not a student, born in UK, without children. Population: GB age 16-29 (excluding stulawy=1). Source: 2001 UK Census Individual Sample of Anonymised Records. Migration is in period 2000-2001. Emboldened coefficients are significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . P is the probability of migrating for the specified characteristics, displayed as a percentage. Coefficients for variables in the model that are not shown act in the same way as results presented in Table II. Ethnic groups for whom none of the sex interactions were statistically significant have not been included in the table

## **Discussion**

Migration is experienced by sub-groups of the population differently. Selectivity in migration has been investigated in this paper by engaging with ethnic difference and lifecourse perspectives, showing this as a fruitful avenue for furthering our understandings of internal migration.

The central limitation of the analyses presented here is the use of cross-sectional data. The absence of appropriate longitudinal data means the evidence is incomplete. Notwithstanding this constraint, a number of findings contribute to ongoing debates in geography, lifecourse and ethnic integration literatures. First, ethnic group matters in understanding migration within Britain. Ethnic group contributes to predictions of young adults' propensity to migrate; and ethnic differences in mobility persist when other demographic and socio-economic characteristics are accounted for. Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black young adults have particularly low levels of mobility, other characteristics being equal; they are around half as likely to migrate as their White British counterparts.

Most interestingly, however, the paper has shown that examining the role of young adult life events and gender goes some way to improving understanding of ethnic differences in young adult migration within Britain. Two themes emerge: partnership and family formation are differently associated with migration for White British and South Asian young adults; and being a student is differently associated with migration for White British and Chinese young adults compared with their South Asian and Black counterparts.

Being married reduces mobility compared to being single for all ethnic groups. Cohabiting has the same stabilising effect on residential movement for Indians and Pakistanis whereas for White young adults cohabiting is associated with greater residential mobility. This difference can be interpreted in terms of differences in partnership formation (marriage and cohabitation) and in the conjuncture of partnership formation and leaving the family

home. Three findings from the literature are particularly pertinent: for immigrant-origin groups family may exert strong influence on residential choice (Mulder 1997, de Valk and Billari 2007); ethnic groups experience different pathways out of the family home, with marriage more important for certain minority groups than for the majority population (de Valk and Billari 2007, Mitchell *et al* 2004, Goldschneider and Goldschneider 1997); and female mobility is more strongly linked to marriage than male mobility for young adults of some immigrant-origin groups (Mulder 1997, de Valk and Billari 2007).

An interpretation of the results presented here for the British case may be as follows. For White Britons, living independently is common in late teen years, often associated with migration for study or cohabitation. Indeed, a fifth of White British young adults are cohabiting (2001 Census SAR, age 16-29). Thus, the initial move from the family home is common for White British young adults prior to marriage, including into cohabiting relationships.

In comparison, the South Asian groups may be more likely to remain in the family home whilst single, marking the point of marriage as a migration junction and creating the distinction in levels of migration between those who are single and those who are married. Cohabitation is rare in South Asian communities in Britain (less than 4% of those aged 16-29 in 2001 Census SAR) and, certainly, cohabitation is not associated with the same residential (and perhaps relationship) transience as for White British young adults. It can be speculated that marriage is an important home leaving pathway for young South Asians. This theory posits intergenerational transfer in traditions of marriage and home leaving for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi young adults that is not seen for other ethnic groups which is plausible given the distinctive immigration histories and family arrangements of South Asian communities (Lindley *et al* 2004).

In addition, for Indian and Pakistani female young adults, being married increases migration levels above those for males who are married. Speculation can be made that this reflects traditions of patrilocalities where the wife moves to live with her husband or husband's family following marriage (Dyson and Visari 2004). It is substantively sensible that this effect is strongest for Pakistani young adults given their traditions of family solidarity, and this serves to make the point that there are considerable differences, for example in immigration history and religion (as well as the factors considered in these models), between the three South Asian groups discussed here. The effect of married females being more mobile than married males also holds for White British young adults. Female cohabiters are also more mobile than their male counterparts raising the question of whether in partnership formation of White British young adults females are more likely to move to join males than vice versa. For White British and South Asian young adults the findings suggest that females are the 'partnership movers' though the reasons for this may differ between ethnic groups.

White British and South Asian young adults with children are more mobile than those without. This is the opposite relationship from the population as a whole. This may well be an artefact of the data used in that the time points of having children and migrating are not captured. Those who are in their late teens and twenties and have children may experience a period of mobility until they find housing suited to their lifestyle choices, financial circumstances and family arrangements. Older adults with children may be stable in the established family home thus reducing the apparent effect of having children on mobility. Indeed, for the oldest White British young adults (age 25-29) having children has a stabilising effect on residential mobility. This stabilising effect is not seen for the South Asian (or other) ethnic groups.

The mobilising effect of children is unsurprising as the growth of a family brings new housing and neighbourhood aspirations. These may, however, differ between ethnic groups.

For the White British population, increased accommodation and a garden are desired by families with children. For South Asians, particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi, ties to family may instead be of primary importance as suggested by Mulder (2007). In particular, care for family, old and young, in South Asian communities tends to be within the family, with little use of formal childcare (Dale and Ahmed 2010). This increases the need to live close to (or with) family members. Why the stabilising effect of children on residential mobility seen for White British young adults aged 25-29 is not evident for other ethnic groups is unclear.

A stabilising effect of children is evident for female parents compared with male parents for White, Pakistani, Other Asian and Other groups. This difference is assumed to be the result of migration patterns of lone-parent families being different from those of two-parent (male and female) families because in the latter case the parents are assumed to migrate together. The finding suggests that, for some ethnic groups, lone mothers have particularly low levels of residential mobility.

The second theme emerging from this paper's results is ethnic differences in the effect of being a student on migration. Students of minority ethnic groups were found to be less mobile than their White British counterparts as hypothesised. For most ethnic groups, there was no additional effect of student status combined with ethnicity. The effect of student status was also the most age-specific of the young adult life events explored which is unsurprising given the strong tendency for undergraduate study in Britain to be undertaken immediately following the completion of further/school education at age 18/19. Thus, student status mattered for migration for 20-24 year olds, not at all for 16-19 year olds and only for the White British for those aged 25-29.

For the White British and Chinese groups being a student mattered, making young adults additionally mobile. This effect was particularly strong for Chinese students whose

probability of migrating was 21 percent compared to 14 percent for Chinese young adults who were not students (other characteristics held constant). For Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black African young adults, however, being a student reduced residential mobility compared with not being a student. For Pakistani young adults, being a female student reduces mobility even further. These differences suggest different student housing traditions across ethnic groups. The general expectation of university education meaning a move away from home and moves each year into new accommodation appears to be applicable to only White British and Chinese young adults. Following Connor *et al* (2004), it can be speculated that Pakistani, particularly female Pakistani, and Black students tend to remain within the family home which raises questions about access to higher education.

In conclusion, this study has illuminated some of the complexities of migration in young adulthood and shown the importance of examining ethnic group and gender. Taking a lifecourse perspective has enabled some untangling of the meaning of ethnicity with respect to migration. This has allowed the discussion to move beyond residential segregation and explanations of ethnic group migration differences that focus on ‘White flight’ and ‘minority self-segregation’. The paper has shown ethnic and gender differences in how migration in young adulthood is associated with partnership formation, children and study. Further investigation of ethnic groups’ differing migration pathways in young adulthood would be a fruitful avenue of research.

## **Acknowledgements**

The 2001 Census Samples of Anonymised Records are provided through the Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research (University of Manchester), with the support of the ESRC and JISC. Use of the 2001 Census Controlled Access Microdata Sample is supported by the Office for National Statistics. Census output is Crown copyright and all tables containing Census data, and the results of analysis, are reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office and the Queen's Printer for Scotland. The author alone is responsible for the interpretation of the data.

This research was sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council through the Understanding Population Trends and Processes (UPTAP) programme, grant RES-163-27-0011. I am extremely grateful for the support, financial and otherwise, provided by the UPTAP initiative. I thank Naomi Bushin, Gemma Catney, Tony Champion, Angela Dale, Sylvie Dubuc, Nina Glick-Schiller, Stephen Jivraj, Alan Marshall, James Nazroo, Albert Sabater, Ludi Simpson and the participants of the CED International Seminar on Demographic Behaviours and Social Integration of Immigrants (Barcelona, April 2010) for very useful comments during the development of this paper. I am also grateful to three anonymous referees for very helpful comments.



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